

BOSTON ABE COMMUNITY PLANNING PROJECT SUMMARY OF 14 BOSTON NEIGHBORHOOD COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT REPORTS

The data for this report is taken from the "Implications/Conclusions" section of the Comprehensive Community Report of each neighborhood listed below. The section includes: summary of key findings; conclusion for one or more target group; gaps in existing services; barriers/challenges; and implications for service planning. This summary is organized accordingly.

Listing of the 14 Boston Neighborhoods¹:

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Allston-Brighton | 8. Hyde Park and West Roxbury |
| 2. Charlestown | 9. Jamaica Plain |
| 3. Chinatown | 10. The North End |
| 4. Dorchester | 11. Roslindale |
| 5. Downtown | 12. Roxbury |
| 6. East Boston | 13. South Boston |
| 7. Fenway/Kenmore | 14. South End |

A. Summary of Key Findings

1. Allston-Brighton

- Large varied immigrant population, documented & undocumented, with growing Asian, Portuguese and Brazilian populations
- Population less white and less English speaking
- Growing incomes discrepancy with increasing poverty levels
- Extremely high housing costs (affects the entire community)
- Large immigrant & non-English speaking population in desperate need of ABE/ESOL services
- Significant need for continuous ESOL instructions at all levels without interruptions
- Non-English speaking immigrants have a variety of needs from professionals who are literate in their own language to the illiterate in both their native language and English
- Existing high dropout rate, faced with potential to increase significantly due to MCAAS scores, leading to large #s of residents in need of ABE/GED services
- Large waitlists for ABE/GED/ESOL programs
- Increasing Boston unemployment rate that could lead to an even more pronounced need for job training and job readiness

2. Charlestown

- Need for additional ABE/ESOL slots/Citizenship programs
- Need for affordable child care slots
- Need for employment opportunities in Charlestown
- Lack of affordable housing in Charlestown

¹ The neighborhoods represented are those with local ABE community planning coalitions.

- Lack of skills training opportunities in Charlestown

3. Chinatown

- More financial resources are needed
- Better coordination among all of Chinatown's ABE/ESOL providers re: class scheduling, curriculum, space and other assets which could be shared
- Involve local employers in community planning partnership
- Systemic changes & public/private partnerships are needed due to the fragmentation of ABE/ESOL and job training systems
- Increase general public awareness (inside and outside of Chinatown) of the role of adult basic education in the community

4. Dorchester

- Need for both ABE classes and ESOL classes that lead to a credential (GED, High School Diploma) for entrance into training programs, college and employment.
- Lack of visibility of Dorchester's Adult Education Program indicating a need for systematic outreach to the community, development of awareness of the programs that exist and the need for additional program services.
- The large # of Dorchester residents who have less than a 9th grade education indicates a strong need for ABE classes.
- The large # of Dorchester residents who have between a 9th & 12th grade education indicates a strong need for Adult Secondary Education/GED classes.
- Dorchester's minority population is now the majority, 68% of the population is minority and 32% is white indicating a need for additional ESOL classes including Native Language Literacy classes for those who are not literate in their native language.
- Dorchester has a large % of foreign-born residents with a high % who are not citizens, indicating a need for citizenship classes & support services for immigrants.
- Dorchester parents indicated a need for parent workshops to improve communication with their children's teachers, and to develop an understanding of their children's assessment of progress.

5. Downtown

- Strong need and demand for adult education services in Downtown Boston, especially for ESOL
- Conflict between work and class schedules are a major barrier to participation in adult education services
- Family responsibilities & lack of childcare are barriers, particularly for women
- Limited awareness of free adult education programs prevents some people from pursuing services & prevents some agencies from referring clients for services
- Substance abuse, homelessness, and for ABE students, the stigma of illiteracy are barriers to enrollment and retention in adult education programs.
- A more gradual transition may be required for ESOL students who are interested in moving to ABE/GED/EDP programs, not only because the classes are in English, but also because they encounter multiple subjects. Moreover, the student

centered, competency based approach of EDP programs is uncomfortable for and foreign to students from teacher centered, textbook based educational programs in their native countries.

- Former ESOL students agreed that their initial experiences with U.S. classes taught in English were very difficult, often leaving them feeling overwhelmed and confused. Getting comfortable might take several months. This was compounded when students were placed in programs that were too advanced or for some reason not appropriate for them.
- ESOL students voiced difficulty with the lack of one standard that clearly outlined what they need to know and the sequence in which they need to learn it. They also expressed problems with a lack of continuity in the curriculum, which at times seemed to them to not be building in a gradual sensible progression
- A number of focus group participants said that, at one point, they had been placed in classes that were too difficult or too easy.

6. East Boston

- Overwhelming need for additional ABE, GED preparation, alternative high school diploma programs
- ESL, Family Literacy, Native Language Literacy, Spanish GED classes, Citizenship classes, Job Readiness & Training, Additional employment opportunities, Health Education, Expansion of Elderly Services, Support Services, Multi-lingual support, Increased opportunity for Civic involvement & leadership, Immigration & affordable housing

7. Fenway/Kenmore

- ESOL needs far exceeds the needs for other adult education services, but it is far from being met through current class availability
- (Based on survey results) immigrants living in low-cost housing indicate a disproportionate need for ESOL with only 67 slots of free classes available in the community
- Service employees (serving major institutions in the area) need ESOL classes
- People want near by classes & in case of Mission Main -- onsite classes
- In spite of enormous need for ESOL classes at Mission Main, they are limited by the grant and must restrict admissions
- Fenway neighborhood does not have a efficient referral center/directory OR a partnership prior to the development of Fenway Community Partnership for Adult Learning
- Volunteers are available, but lack the skill to teach ABE or ESOL
- Adult learners of any age are valuable resources in the community
- State wide government initiative is needed to adequately fund ESOL & ABE classes
- Class availability is often a problem relative to job scheduling
- Class availability is often a problem relative to childcare
- Effort to develop the community partnership has taken an inordinate amount of time, but has yielded valuable info and has become the vehicle for establishing relationship that match resources with need

- Partnership is becoming known -- leading people outside the Partnership to seek ways to participate
- While income data has not change ((in either 10 or 20 years before the 2000 census), inflation and cost of living have (esp. housing costs)
- Using volunteer efforts the Partnership can potentially address the poor academic performance of students at risk of dropping out of high school
- The Partnership has become an important part of the Fenway community and needs to continue and expand its work
- In order to succeed the Partnership must develop a strategic plan

8. Hyde Park & West Roxbury

- Important changes in the demographics of Hyde Park & West Roxbury neighborhoods, potentially indicating a growing need for ESOL & ABE services.
- One of the critical reasons for Hyde Park & West Roxbury residents to obtain ABE & ESOL services is to develop new skills for workplace success.
- "Youth Boom" on the way that will need ABE services due to their lack of high school diplomas after failing the MCAS examination required for graduation as of this year.
- Current services schedules and available resources do not sufficiently serve Hyde Park & West Roxbury residents needing ABE & ESOL services.

9. Jamaica Plain

- Flow of immigrants settling in Jamaica Plain remains consistent, indicating a strong & steady need for ESOL services
- High #s of Limited English Proficient parents of minority & bilingual pre-school and school-aged children point to educational hindrances for these youth without adult ESOL and related services available to prevent cycles of low literacy in families
- Gaps in educational attainment, low school performance and increase in jobless rate point to a consistent and growing need for ABE/GED & Diploma classes
- Barriers to enrollment and attendance are varied. Some will require greater resources and collaboration to ameliorate, while others may not be so readily solvable

10. The North End

- The North End is primarily a neighborhood of opportunity, not residence for immigrants seeking entry-level employment
- There is 1 North End ABE Program (ESOL program offering single classes at 4 language levels
- Bridge programs are needed in the areas of job skills, computer training and employment counseling
- Space for ABE program expansion is a challenge in a neighborhood of high density commercial use

11. Roslindale

- Rapid & significant shift in Roslindale's demographics indicated a strong and growing need for increased ESOL and adult related support
- State-funded ABE and social services providers need to explore alternative funding sources in order to maintain and safeguard against the dismantling of existing programs.
- ABE Community must identify multiple ways of engaging the Greater Roslindale Community in the mission of ABE.
- Mental Health services targeting recent immigrants are needed to address issues of culture/status shock.
- The Roslindale Adult Literacy Community Planning Group continues to build upon the initial efforts established during Years I & II of the Community Planning Process.

12. Roxbury

- Although there are a great # and variety of ABE services currently available the need outweighs the availability of services
- Burgeoning interest in adult basic education
- Need for ABE information
- High community confidence in the Dudley area.
- Need for more comprehensive ABE, GED, ESOL & EDP Programs with:
 - Longer, full-time programs with evening and weekend classes
 - Daytime and evening GED classes for young adults
 - More convenient locations
 - Mentoring, tutoring and support systems
 - More emphasis on real-life curriculum
 - More integration of basic immigration laws & immigrants' rights
 - Additional citizenship classes
 - More conversational English
- Increased opportunities for job-skills training, by strengthening the relationships among skills training providers, educational providers, employers, and career centers
- More computer training
- Need for better quality and more family and health related support services including:
 - Free or low-cost quality childcare
 - Free or low cost transportation
 - Information on parenting and family literacy
 - Free or low cost family counseling
 - Substance abuse support
 - Healthcare enrollment & comprehensive healthcare access.

13. South Boston

- Revitalization projects and the integration of public housing developments have fueled a significant change in South Boston demographics since the 1990 Census.

- This change in demographics has resulted in an increase in the number of residents with low levels of English proficiency; 16.8% of South Boston households speak languages other than English at home.
- This need for ESOL services is especially high among residents in Boston Housing Authority family housing developments where 46% of 2,295 households do not speak English at home.
- Despite an overall improvement in the levels of educational attainment in South Boston residents, 18.9% of South Boston residents do not have a high school diploma and 6.3% of have less than a 9th grade education.
- More than half (56.1%) of the South Boston female headed families with children under the age of 18 are living in poverty, and this rate increases to 62.4% for female headed families with children under the age of 5 in the household.
- Students travel from all over the city, and as far away as Brockton, to attend ABE/ESOL programs in South Boston.

14. South End

- A significant shift in the demographics of the South End has exacerbated the need for ABE/ESOL and related services for residents whose options are limited by low levels of educational attainment & English language proficiency
- Need for ABE/ESOL services is especially high in BHA operated public housing developments

Overall Summary of Key Findings

- ⇒ ** Many of the findings are also repeated in other sections and the author has chosen to place them in categories where they best fit
- ⇒ 100% (14 of 14) of the Neighborhood Coalitions indicated a urgent for increased funding and resources for Adult Educational Services (at all levels)
- ⇒ 43% (6 of 14) expressed concerns about the large varying immigrant populations
- ⇒ 36% (5 of 14) indicated a strong need for increase overall awareness of the needs for ABE services
- ⇒ 36% (5 of 14) believed that systemic issues need to be addressed
- ⇒ 29% (4 of 14) expressed concerns about the lack of affordable childcare
- ⇒ 29% (4 of 14) indicated a need for additional skill training
- ⇒ 21% (3 of 14) expressed concerns about the high cost of housing (or lack of affordable housing)
- ⇒ 21% (3 of 14) expressed concerns about the increasing unemployment rate
- ⇒ 14% (2 of 14) expressed concerns about the high dropout rates

B. Summary of Specific Population Needs

1. Allston-Brighton

- Non -English speakers who need ESOL services (at all levels)
- Residents (English & non-English speakers) who need GED programs
- Residents who need family literacy programs
- Residents who need technology/computer training to find work

- Resident who need job training and job readiness programs
- Immigrants who need citizenship program and overall assistance.

2. Charlestown

- Learners in need of ABE/GED/EDP classes
- Learners in need of ESOL classes
- Learners in need of Citizenship classes
- Learners in need of basic employment skills via collaborations
- Learners in need of technology education

3. Chinatown

- Different learner perceptions of the importance of learning English:
 - Learners need to change their way of thinking to look the big picture.
 - Learners at all levels need to know how to plan for successful transitions to employment and/or higher levels of education
 - Learners need more educational and career counseling
 - Learners need different kinds of tracks
- Gender differences & constraints:
 - Better services for Chinese male workers who currently have fewer options
 - Many ABE/ESOL classes average 80% female or higher
 - "In the Chinese family, the men work in the restaurants; the women learn English."
- Other Needs
 - More tutors, especially for learners at the lowest English levels
 - Improved links to other sources of volunteer tutors, esp. businesses which could involve employees as tutors and mentors
 - Conversation groups to help shy, passive learners increase their confidence to use English more
 - A formal and thorough needs and interest assessment of students
 - Increased support for learners who finish skills training programs or who drop out of ABE/ESOL classes to take entry-level jobs
 - Other kinds of post-employment assistance (mentoring, additional counseling, career ladders, etc.)

4. Dorchester

- The homeless population
- The Vietnamese Community
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5. Downtown

- Immigrants & refugees
- Low-wage workers
- People without a high school credential
- People with a credential but without skills to succeed in this economy
- Single mothers with children under 5
- At-risk populations including families in poverty and the working poor, adult learners with diagnosed or undiagnosed learning disabilities, resettled refugees --

traumatized due to war and other issues, immigrant who are illiterate in their native language & the homeless

6. East Boston

7. Fenway/Kenmore

- Resident immigrant populations including Russians, Chinese, Spanish and other ethnic and linguistic groups
- Employers who employ non-English speaking workers
- Immigrants that live in Mission Main (Housing Development)

8. Hyde Park & West Roxbury

- The working poor
- Young adults
- Haitian Immigrants

9. Jamaica Plain

- # of young-adult learners, i.e. those students who have recently dropped out of high school
- Teen pregnancy, which,, coupled with low school performance & drop out rates, reveal that family literacy need are growing more pressing
- Diversity of countries from which immigrants come, and in the variety of native language that they speak

10. The North End

- Multi-cultural, multi-ethnic immigrant workforce

11. Roslindale

- a. Non-English speaking residents who need ESOL services
- b. Service employees of Roslindale who need ESOL
- c. Large and small employers who need employees that are bilingual and have good English Language Proficiency
- d. Recent immigrants who need mental health support services
- e. Residents of Public Housing Developments who need ABE & GED services

12. Roxbury

- Non-English speaking residents who need expanded ESOL, ABE, EDP, GED & citizenship classes
- Residents who need stronger supports (academic, financial and social) to facilitate class enrollment and attendance and to help with persistence and retention.

13. South Boston

- Critical & growing need for ESOL services
- Significant need (and growing) for ABE/GED services
- Increased ABE/ESOL services to residents of BHA developments

- Increased outreach to single mothers

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14. **South End**

- Low income residents with low levels of educational attainment
- Low income residents with low levels of English proficiency
- Highest where poor people are concentrated -- in housing developments, among female headed households and in homeless shelters

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Overall Summary of Specific Population Needs

- ⇒ Needs of Immigrants & Refugees
 - ESOL classes (10 of 14)
 - Citizenship classes (2 of 14)
 - Literacy Support in Native Language (3 of 14)
 - Family Literacy (2 of 14)
 - Mental Health Services (1 of 14)
 - Technology training
- ⇒ 43% (6 of 14) indicated services (ABE/GED/DEP) for young people
- ⇒ 28% (4 of 14) indicated Job training/readiness
- ⇒ 21% (3 of 14) indicated services for residents of public housing
- ⇒ 14% (2 of 14) indicated services for single mothers with children under 5
- ⇒ 14% (2 of 14) indicated support for and connection to employers who employ non-English speaking workers
- ⇒ 7% (1 of 14) indicated support for the following:
 - Homeless
 - Working Poor
 - Individuals without degrees
 - Individuals with degrees and limited or no skills
 - Individuals with diagnosed (or undiagnosed) learning disabilities

C. Summary of Gaps in Existing Services

1. Allston-Brighton

- More ESOL classes in multiple languages at all levels
- More ABE/ESOL classes for both English & non-English speakers
- More computer skills
- More resource for ABE/ESOL students with special needs
- More citizenship classes
- More job training & readiness programs
- More ESOL classes that assist students with reading and writing their native language
- More job counseling information for professional immigrant population

2. Charlestown

- Transitional program for ESOL to ABE learners
- ESOL/ABE evening classes
- Additional technology education slots

- Support services for employment/training
- Citizenship education program

3. Chinatown

- Time of classes
 - Morning ESOL classes are too early for restaurant workers & mothers of elementary school children
 - Late afternoon or early evening classes are not possible for those working early restaurant shifts
- No seamless continuum of services:
 - Inability to continue with ABE creates difficulty if they choose to go from community-based ESOL to college, skills training or a GED or an External Diploma Program (EDP)
- Lack of lower-level ESOL opportunities
 - With the continuing arrival of Chinese immigrants, the waiting list grow in Chinatown
 - The departure of Harvard University's Philip Brooks House Association ESOL classes from Chinatown to Cambridge

4. Dorchester

- ESOL-ABE bridge classes
- GED/College bridge classes
- Native Language Literacy
- 0-3 Adult Basic Education

5. Downtown

- Resources needed to add classes (long waitlists for ESOL classes and the issue of "scheduling gaps" which prevents others from including their names on the waiting lists)
- Continuum of services for ESOL students transitioning to pre-GED/GED/EDP programs
- Workforce development system
- Educational needs of incumbent workers & employers' contributions to addressing their own workforces' educational development
- Social safety net for single mother with children under 5 & other families in poverty
- Needs of adult learners with diagnosed or undiagnosed disabilities
- Services for homeless adult learners

6. East Boston

7. Fenway/Kenmore

- To serve the need of thousands of immigrants who live and/or work in the Fenway/Kenmore neighborhood, currently there are
 - 67 slots available at the DOE funded program at the YMCA

- 30 slots available at free classes funded by the Empowerment Zone grant written in collaboration between the YMCA International Learning Center & Mission Main
- ESOL volunteer tutors at YMCA International Learning Center
- ESOL volunteer program at Morville House and Kenmore Abbey, (affordable housing for Senior citizens)

8. Hyde Park & West Roxbury

- Existing services in evening classes
- Bridge between ABE & ESOL educational services and higher level education and training
- Volume of need for more ABE & ESOL classes

9. Jamaica Plain

- Long waiting list for adult ESOL & moderate lists for ABE/GED
- Few formal links between schools and childhood centers
- Affordable childcare (evenings and weekend hours)
- Shortage of classroom space
- Very few employers that offer on-site skills training & paid release time
- Very limited affordable computer training

10. The North End

- Insufficient ABE/ESOL classes for adult learners in need of lower-level English classes
- Bridge classes between ESOL and employment skills and opportunities
- No job skills component

11. Roslindale

- Limited opportunities for adults to enter a GED program, citizenship, or computer classes.
- No native language literacy classes for adult unable to read or write in their native languages

12. Roxbury

- Lack of weekend & evening classes.
- Insufficient # of citizenship classes
- Insufficient # of computer training classes, especially in more advanced areas.

13. South Boston

- Shortage of bridge/transitional programs from ESOL to ABE and from GED/EDP to college
- Services to adult learners with learning disabilities & mental illnesses
- Need for more day and evening ESOL programs

14. South End

- Transitional services from ABE to GED; from GED to higher education and/or employment; and from ESOL to ABE and beyond
- Overall need for additional ABE/ESOL slots

Overall Summary of Gaps in Existing Services

- ⇒ 71% (10 of 14) indicated ESOL classes at all levels
- ⇒ 57% (8 of 14) indicated "bridge" or transitional services from ESOL to ABE
- ⇒ 36% (5 of 14) indicated computer skills training
- ⇒ 29% (4 of 14) indicated citizenship classes
- ⇒ 21% (3 of 14) indicated AB/ESOL services for individuals with special needs
- ⇒ 21% (3 of 14) indicated assistance in Native Language
- ⇒ 21% (3 of 14) indicated ESOL/ABE evening classes
- ⇒ 14% (2 of 14) indicated job readiness & training
- ⇒ 14% (2 of 14) indicated time schedules of classes
- ⇒ 14% (2 of 14) indicated support services for employment
- ⇒ 7% (1 of 14) indicated the following:
 - Affordable childcare
 - Shortage of classroom space
 - Weak (or no) links between schools and childcare centers
 - GED services
 - Weekend classes
 - Services for the homeless
 - Employment involvement

D. Summary of Barriers & Challenges

1. Allston-Brighton

- Overall lack of affordable childcare
- Lack of creative schedule to meet the varying needs of potential students
- Long waitlists
- Extremely high housing costs force some residents to work 2 or 3 jobs
- Undocumented immigrants fearful of INS
- Time required for transportation
- A hidden demand exists for some who do not know of available classes
- Additional \$ is desperately needed for ABE/ESOL classes
- Inability to provide support for students with diagnosed learning disabilities

2. Charlestown

- Lack of affordable child care slots
- Class schedule/work schedule conflict
- Family'/domestic problems
- Learning disabilities
- Lack of native language literacy skills
- Housing issues
- Waiting lists

3. Chinatown

- Child care issues
- Conflict between work, family and learning English
- Lack of stability
- Conflicting educational cultures and expectations
 - with student-centered approaches students expect a teacher-centered model (culture in China and other Asian countries) and are disappointed
- Space for classrooms
- Transportation
- Lack of employer awareness of ABE/ESOL benefits

4. Dorchester

- Lack of child-care
- Lack of transportation
- Need for more flexible class schedule

5. Downtown

- Long waitlists
- Waitlists for homeless people interested in adult education services (because of the difficulty in contacting them after several months)
- Busy schedules, family responsibilities & lack of childcare are especially difficult for women
- Lack of knowledge about services
- Substance abuse, poverty, homelessness and the stigma of illiteracy
- Systemic barriers = state & federal emphasis on "Work first" and short-term training and the Mass. Workforce Training Fund lack of support for long-term ESOL & ABE for incumbent workers

6. East Boston

- Travel is difficult due to the following: finances, tunnel traffic and fear of travel

7. Fenway/Kenmore

- Job schedules
- Time schedules
- Childcare
- Class scheduling
- Problem solving assistance

8. Hyde Park & West Roxbury

- Employment issues
 - Conflict between work & class schedules
 - Need to work more jobs or change jobs to make ends meet
- Transportation
- Affordable Childcare

9. Jamaica Plain

- Lack of money

- Childcare
- Work schedules
- Housing
- Transportation
- Health problems
- Competing demands of family and multiple jobs
- Demands for working parents of preschool children (regardless of onsite childcare or not)
- Matching limited public transportation schedules with class schedules
- Long waiting lists
- **SYSTEMIC BARRIERS & CHALLENGES**
 - Burdens of program administration & adherent requirements from a multiplicity of funders & adherent requirement hinder interagency collaboration
 - Prescriptive and narrow service delivery guidelines restrict the flexibility to create new & integrated services and substantive partnerships
 - Timing of RFP's and funding streams and lack of coordination in designing and releasing them makes long-term collaboration & planning difficult
 - Limited funding and recent cuts make it impossible to serve all in need
 - Shortage of affordable or free childcare space, specifically during daytime hours impedes programs' abilities to expand daytime class offerings

10. The North End

- Limited space for program expansion
- Low-paying jobs with changing work schedules

11. Roslindale

- Very limited affordable onsite low cost (or free) childcare
- Culture/status shock to newly arrived immigrants

12. Roxbury

- Lack of literacy skills
- Lack of sufficient information on ABE
- Waiting lists
- Need for quality affordable, dependable and easily accessible childcare
- Time constraints balancing work, family, and school
- Due to limited resources, need to choose between work and education

13. South Boston

- Lack of free or affordable childcare
- Housing prices forcing many of ABE/GED students out of the community
- Transportation costs (prohibitive for many students who have to travel from outside of South Boston to classes)

14. South End

- Lack of affordable childcare

- Geographical isolation (real or imposed)
- Homelessness

Overall Summary of Barriers and Challenges

- ⇒ 76% (11 of 14) indicated childcare
- ⇒ 64% (9 of 14) indicated class/work schedules
- ⇒ 36% (5 of 14) indicated transportation
- ⇒ 29% (4 of 14) indicated the following:
 - Waitlists
 - High Housing Costs
 - Conflicts between work and family
- ⇒ 21% (3 of 14) indicated instability/lack of resources
- ⇒ 14% (2 of 14) indicated the following:
 - Learning disabilities
 - Insufficient space
 - Systemic/institutional issues
 - Insufficient information available
 - Homeless
- ⇒ 7% (1 of 14) indicated the following:
 - Lack of employer awareness
 - Fear of travel
 - Health Issues
 - Geographic Isolation
 - Substance abuse
 - Poverty
 - Stigma of illiteracy

E. Summary of Implications for Service Planning

1. Allston-Brighton

- ABE/ESOL providers face the challenge of growing demands with limited resources
- Specific immigrants populations needs should be evaluated
- ABE/ESOL programs should consider a review of training & utilizing volunteers
- ABE/ESOL programs could be affected by increased #s of teens and preteens dropping out of school due to the MCAS requirement
- ABE/ESOL programs need to develop or access concrete mechanisms to assess learning disabilities and provide quality services to these individuals

2. Charlestown

- Need to address the barriers of our target populations which include lack of language skills, literacy skills, employment skills by strengthening our referral process to utilize all community resources
- Need to be responsive to the changes in our demographics to be better able to deliver comprehensive services
- Need to work with employers to develop a list of required workplace competencies

- Need to expand our capacity to provide citizenship education through the efforts of the collaborative
- Need to expand our capacity to support ESOL learners as they transition to ABE or skills training

3. Chinatown

- Priorities for 2003 strategic plan (not prioritized)
 - a. All ESOL/ABE providers participate in ongoing dialogue
 - b. Increase sharing of educational best practices among ESOL/ABE providers in the community.
 - c. Need to offer an intermediate-level ABE transitional program at night and/or weekends.
 - d. Increase publicity of program success stories.
 - e. Increase opportunities for learners not interested in higher learning
 - f. Involve more employers.
 - g. Need for more lower level (SPL 0 - 4) ESOL classes at different times of day, at night and on the weekend.
 - h. Further develop a bilingual brochure.
 - i. Continue to expand community partnership website: www.ccepoboston.net

4. Dorchester

- a. Increase community awareness of and visibility of Adult Education Programs:
 - Create a Directory of Services
 - Update the DALC Brochure and translate into the 5 major languages of Dorchester
 - Publicize via local media including language specific radio and cable and by attending community-wide events
- b. Create additional ESOL/ABE Bridge Classes
- c. Create partnerships with Child-Care Providers
- d. Collaborate with Employers to provide Work Place Education
- e. Advocate for the special needs populations in Dorchester

5. Downtown

- New revenue streams should be considered, for example:
 - o Working with employers and unions to obtain financial support for adult education services for incumbent workers;
 - o Offering off-site education programs to unions and employers;
 - o Expanding use of Workforce Investment Act funding that is tied to layoffs;
 - o Expanding use of Mass. Office for Refugees and Immigrants funding tied to surges in immigration.
- Addressing the conflict between work and class schedules should be considered, for example:
 - o Advocating with employers regarding the work schedules of adult learners;

- Experimenting with alternative scheduling of adult education classes.
- Ways to ease the transition between ESOL and ABE/GED/EDP programs should be considered.
- Enhancing coordination and collaboration among adult education providers should occur in order to provide a more cohesive, seamless educational experience for adult education students.
- Ways to provide both smaller classes and smaller skill ranges within classes should be explored, particularly for refugees and immigrants, in order to help new students cope with the feelings of being lost, confused and overwhelmed.
- Planning should occur regarding how to respond to a possible flood of applications from students who leave high school and middle school without a high school diploma.
- Planning should occur regarding how to address the educational needs of people without homes who frequent the Downtown area.

6. East Boston

- All services need to be provided within the neighborhood

7. Fenway/Kenmore

- Tap into resources of employers and solicit contributions from organizations & individuals
- Involve the individuals that we are serving
- Continue researching the needs in order to better tailor programs
- Study future economic indicators (city & state) to better advise students re: the economic trends which influence the job market
- Continue assisting learners to overcome barriers which prevent them from meeting their goals
- Offer child care by swapping child care slots in exchange for reading to kids in the child car program
- Cross refer residents to services available in the community
- Secure memo of understanding -- committing support of ABE services among the partners

8. Hyde Park & West Roxbury

- ABE & ESOL need to be offered in the evening.
- Efforts to develop partnerships with employers who employ or could employ low-income residents need to be enhanced.
- Greater outreach to continue to build bridges to the emerging new immigrant populations mentioned in this report.
- Greater planning efforts need to begin now to meet the future needs of young adults who leave high school without obtaining a diploma due to MCAS requirement.

9. Jamaica Plain

- Community resources (including use of space) need to be leveraged through collaboration & partnerships with other groups and agencies

- Integrated network of services make it easier for some learners to participate, e.g., agencies work together to fill the service gaps and better serve the learner
- Given the multiple obligations of many working class parents, poor and limited English proficient adults, some might choose to put off studying until their children are older, or they have additional family and income supports, regardless of what services are in place
- Workplace based ABE/ESOL might ease some of the burdens of some learners who are trying to juggle multiple jobs, families and school
- Community-based programs play an important role in workforce because so many of the lacking skills identified by employers are not industry-specific, but are basic math, literacy and communication skills
- Strong links between community-based ABE programs and employers can help those adult who have gained these skills in jobs
- Greater levels of funding and more flexible funding are essential to filling the gaps in services.
- Relationships with a greater diversity of community development and multi-service agencies are necessary to best serve all immigrant groups
- Providers need broader knowledge and related to the specific immigration circumstances, educational needs, cultural codes and traditions of a diverse student body
- Student counselors and teachers may be challenged to develop curriculum, resources, referrals, and communication strategies that respond to the needs of younger learners
- Some younger learners may be better served by additional & specialized funding to provide classes specifically geared to young and recent drop outs

10. The North End

- a. Expansion of lower-level classes to accommodate more immigrants working in he North End
- b. Development of a bridge program from ABE/ESOL to job skills, computer technology & employment counseling
- c. Development of creative space-sharing models for expanded ABE service delivery in collaboration with other North End institutions
- d. Recruitment of volunteers from North End residents as tutors in English, computer technology and job skills

11. Roslindale

- Continue the planning efforts by:
 - expanding membership (including a mental health provider)
 - Following up with business contacts
 - Re-establishing with Hyde Park/West Roxbury Community Planning Coalition
 - Continuing the collaboration with Zero to Eight Cluster (for childcare slots)
 - Continuing the collaboration with ABE providers and advocacy organizations across the city

12. Roxbury

- Do more thorough outreach on existing services
- Implement weekend hours for ABE & ESOL providing funding is awarded for these programs
- Hire baby-sitters for evening classes providing funding or resources are available

13. South Boston

- ABE/ESOL service providers in South Boston expand current levels of services.
- ABE/ESOL service providers collaborate with other human service providers to raise funds and develop the resources needed to overcome barriers to ABE/ESOL program participation.
- ABE/ESOL service providers create linkages with other training programs to prepare adults for positions in the medical field (phlebotomists, dental hygienists and certified nurse assistants)

14. South End

- Service providers collaborate to design career paths to enable potential ABE/ESOL enrollees to progress from poverty and illiteracy to higher education and/or gainful employment.
- Continue collaboration with South End stakeholders to develop a five year plan that reflects a vision of being part of a community that cares for its most vulnerable members & also part of an integrated and comprehensive system of ABE/ESOL and related literacy services
- Service providers collaborate to secure funding to increase the level of ABE/ESOL and related services to adult learners.

Overall Summary of Implications for Service Planning

- ⇒ 50% (7 of 14) suggested working with employers to increase awareness and resources
- ⇒ 43% (6 of 14) indicated the following:
 - Strengthen the Neighborhood Coalitions/Partnerships
 - Expand bridge or transitional programming
- ⇒ 36% (5 of 14) indicated expanding dialogue with ABE providers to determine and share "best practices"
- ⇒ 21% (3 of 14) indicated the following:
 - Identify new revenue streams
 - Use innovative approaches (e.g., swapping of resources)
 - Increase evening & weekend classes
 - Increase marketing and awareness processes
- ⇒ 14% (2 of 14) indicated the following:
 - Acknowledgement that they were operating with limited resources
 - Train and to utilize volunteers
 - Acknowledgement of the impact of MCAS
 - Address special needs/learning disabilities
 - Strengthen referral process
 - Increase awareness of demographic changes

- ⇒ 7% (1 of 14) indicated the following:
- Expand citizenship classes
 - Acknowledgement that specific immigrant groups need to be better evaluated
 - Increase involvement with the clients/students
 - Address the schedule conflicts

Overall Suggestions for Next Steps as a Result of Completing the 14 Boston Neighborhood Comprehensive Community Assessments:

1. Take the time to celebrate a very difficult job well done. Acknowledge the time that it took from conducting your normal course of business. But also acknowledge how the process took you "out of the normal course of doing business."
2. Present & share the results of the comprehensive report (citywide and neighborhood) with Coalition members. Stress the multiple similarities between neighborhoods.
3. Start the strategic planning ASAP (Do not wait.)
4. Use the document as part of your strategic planning.
5. Expand coalition membership to non-traditional membership (e.g., businesspeople, press and legislators). Acknowledge that they will bring new and additional ideas to the table. Find "common" language and innovative ways of looking of addressing the challenges. Be open to "new ways" of compromise and presenting services, e.g. swapping for resources or space, etc.
6. Tell your story in as many venues as possible. Always take the time...
7. Expand your coalition (and resources) to as many ABE providers as possible. There is no competition involved. Remember the urgent need is to provide resources for our clients/students.
8. Look for opportunities to present and share "best or emerging practices."